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TAGS: [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [MARR](#) [PREF](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: NINEQA: TURKISH CG BOTSALI VISIT TO MOSUL 19-20
SEP 2006

Classified By: NINEWA PRT Leader James Knight: Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).
This is a Ninewa Provincial Team (PRT) message.

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) Turkish Consul General for Mosul Huseyn Avni Botsali visited Mosul 19-20 Sep. While this visit was scheduled primarily to initiate contractor work to harden and rehabilitate the Consulate's facilities in Mosul, he held productive discussions on future GOT-Coalition economic and governance cooperation and GOT perspectives on northern Iraq with Ninewa PRT Leader Knight, MDN-N Deputy Commanding General Wiercinski (25th Infantry Division) and PRT USAID Representative Senykoff. Botsali promised to follow up on these cooperation opportunities and fuel issues upon his return to Ankara. End summary.

¶2. (C) Botsali and most of his party traveled overland from Turkey, entering Iraq at Harbur Gate; the balance of his party and an additional armored vehicle arrived in Mosul aboard a GOT C-130. PRT Team Leader Knight met Botsali at 1230 19 Sep at Mosul Airfield (MAF) on FOB Marez East, and there held a wide-ranging discussion with Botsali (joined by his two vice-consuls) while waiting arrival of the Turkish aircraft. After Botsali's 20 Sep courtesy call on BG Wiercinski, Team Leader Knight held an additional meeting at PRT offices which USAID Representative Senykoff joined. Botsali and his party departed Mosul at 1410 20 Sep to return overland to Turkey via Harbur Gate.

Setting up in Mosul

¶3. (S) Botsali detailed that his trip was primarily to facilitate a site visit for Turkish contractors who will prepare the new Turkish Consulate facility in Mosul (formerly the residence of an Iraqi Army division commander). He expects work to begin in 15 days or less, after which the facility will be in condition for occupancy within 6-8 weeks. All work should be completed within 12 weeks. Botsali added that when fully staffed, the Consulate will include five diplomats -- himself, two vice-consuls, and two administrative attaches, as well as 30 Turkish security personnel who are police officers of the GOT Ministry of Interior. He expects to take up residence permanently in Mosul in late November or

early December 2006, when renovation of their new Consulate has reached an appropriate point.

14. (C) Botsali related that the former GOT consulate in Mosul had been closed by Saddam in 1996, when the GOI had also closed its consulate in Istanbul in protest against GOT support for the no-fly zone and related matters. The GOT had maintained a consulate in Mosul since before WWII primarily to support commerce, but the new Consulate will have a political as well as commercial role. In discussion with BG Wiercinski, Botsali emphasized the commercial importance of Mosul for Turkey, and the consequent importance of providing visa services and commercial facilitation at their Consulate. He added that their Mosul consular district will include Ninewa and the three provinces of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), and thus entail overseeing the welfare of the 5,000 or so Turkish nationals working in that area.

Ready to support economic recovery

15. (C) Botsali pointed out that the GOT is already pursuing several capacity-enhancement, economic development, and governance initiatives for Mosul and Ninewa Province, including:

- a visit to Istanbul and Ankara by a 20-member commercial delegation in the near future but after Ramadan;
- a two-week training visit to Ankara by about 35

BAGHDAD 00003539 002 OF 004

Provincial physicians, again after Ramadan; and
-- a two-week orientation and contact visit to Ankara for 20 faculty members of Mosul University.

16. (C) Botsali emphasized that the GOT is favorably disposed to provide training in Turkey for municipal services employees and other capacity-enhancement projects for Ninewa, including projects that could be implemented by the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TICA). He asked that the PRT and USAID develop concrete proposals for such assistance, promising to pursue them in Ankara. Botsali added that Turcomans living in Ninewa and the KRG would be best suited as escorts and facilitators for Turkish initiatives of this kind, since they speak Arabic and Turkish, and often Kurdish as well.

17. (C) Botsali noted that the GOT has already proposed a joint engineering team to rehabilitate water systems in Tal'AFar, and could widen such efforts. Botsali pointed out that he had worked five years in Afghanistan, and that Turkey had taken responsibility for a Provincial Reconstruction Team there; that experience could be usefully applied to Ninewa Province. As security conditions permit, the GOT may be willing to post assistance program staff to Mosul.

18. (C) USAID Representative Senykoff responded that 'composite training' and resulting linkages of the kind proposed by Botsali would fit very well into USAID's evolving approaches for capacity enhancement and knowledge-sharing essential for economic recovery in northern Iraq. Senykoff pointed out that the USAID PRT office has been working with UNAMI for some time and has provided office space for UNAMI; similar courtesies could extended to GOT development workers as USAID seeks to internationalize support for Iraq's recovery.

Botsali responded by noting that he has personal connections to UN offices in Baghdad that might be useful to support coordinated efforts as they evolve.

Ninewa fuel shortages

¶9. (C) Botsali insisted the main issue complicating fuel imports from Turkey is arrears still owed by the GOI to Turkish companies for deliveries already made -- about USD 1 mn, he believes. He also pointed out that the GOI plans to invite the GOI Minister of Economy to Ankara for a working visit, which will be an appropriate occasion to address this issue (Note: Presumably Botsali meant Iraq's Minister of Oil; there is no Minister of Economy per se. End note.)

¶10. (C) When queried by the Team Leader whether these arrears are implicated in the enormous backlog of fuel trucks now at Harbur Gate, he replied that he did not believe so, and that he was uncertain why congestion there is so severe. He asked for details on the magnitude of the problem, and promised to seek clarification and resolution when he returns to Ankara. Botsali noted in his comments to BG Wiercinski that LPG deliveries from Turkey have already resumed.

¶11. (C) Note: the backlog of fuel trucks at Harbur was reported to exceed 3,500 vehicles at one point in August. The PRT is verifying current numbers of fuel trucks waiting to clear the border there and will pass that number to Botsali by e-mail. End note.

The KRG, disputed territories, and Turcomans

¶12. (C) Botsali insisted that there are no particular urgent GOT issues for the KRG at this time, but then somewhat defensively described in detail GOT protection for Iraqi Kurds during Saddam's anti-Kurd campaigns. He clarified that 'protection' included refuge in Turkey and some

BAGHDAD 00003539 003 OF 004

humanitarian aid for Kurds so displaced.

¶13. (C) When asked about GOT views on disputed territories within Ninewa that might eventually be incorporated into the KRG, he noted that the Makhmur refugee camp 'must be closed', then added that current Makhmur camp residents without terrorist connections are welcome to return to Turkey. (Note: the 'disputed territories' in question include Makhmur, Sinjar, Zumar, which were moved out of traditionally Kurd-dominated provinces now part of the KRG during Saddam's regime. End note.) Botsali took the opportunity to insist that the U.S. risks the fate of the Soviets in Afghanistan if Iraq falls victim to ethnic cleansing and then fragments into separate political units.

¶14. (S) When queried by the Team Leader on current GOT concerns for Iraq's Turcomans, Botsali noted in the first instance GOT policy for Iraq is not 'ethnically driven'. He observed that Iraq's Turcomans are 'politically disorganized' and not proportionally represented in Iraqi legislative and executive bodies. Botsali further observed that Iraqi Turcomans are more driven by sectarian (Shi'a or Sunni) than ethnic (Turcoman) loyalties.

Worried about security in Mosul

¶15. (S) At his MAF meeting with Team Leader Knight, Botsali stated that he believed the security situation in Mosul has significantly deteriorated recently. In a discussion of Mosul security the following day at the PRT meeting with Team Leader Knight and Deputy Team Leader LTC Brackney, he seemed somewhat more relaxed about those conditions but emphasized that he 'does not trust' the capabilities and motivation of Iraqi police in the city. He again recalled his experience in Afghanistan, which taught him that training and new equipment are not enough to make an effective security force. We pointed out that the situation in Mosul remains serious, but that both the Iraqi Police and Army forces deployed in Mosul are regularly demonstrating great initiative and effectiveness.

¶16. (S) Botsali was especially impressed by DTL Brackney's point that Iraqi police in Mosul are planning and executing effective security missions without direct Coalition inducement or close direct oversight, as well as our observation that insurgent improvised explosive device (ICED) operations have become progressively less expert and thus significantly less effective in recent months. We again emphasized that security in the city has not deteriorated since Botsali's last visit in July 2006, although there are spikes and lulls in insurgent activity.

COMMENT

¶17. (C) Botsali was unexpectedly forthcoming in his offers to support and pursue GOT development and governance programs in coordination with USAID and international development organizations. We note that USAID Representative Senykoff is within days of his permanent departure from Iraq and still without an identified successor: it will be difficult to mobilize this opportunity if an equally seasoned and effective USAID Representative is not posted to the PRT in a timely fashion.

¶18. (S) Comment continued: Although Botsali continued to seek logistical, intelligence, and security support for him and his Consulate from Coalition forces during this visit, his efforts were relatively muted. He appears somewhat reluctantly resigned to reliance on Iraqi authorities for his Consulate's security, although his GOT security arrangements in Mosul will also be robust. During this visit he was hosted by Mosul Governor Kashmoula, and security and logistical arrangements for his party were made through GOI channels.

BAGHDAD 00003539 004 OF 004

Botsali appears to have been somewhat reassured that his Consulate can begin effective operations once the new Consulate facilities can be occupied. End comment.

¶19. (C) Bio note: When asked about his anticipated tenure as CG in Mosul, Botsali observed that that he was appointed CG on 7 Dec 2005, and that his normal tour would be for two years despite conditions which have so far prevented his residence in Mosul. He expects onward assignment as an Ambassador by December 2007, although he is uncertain where he

will be posted.
SPECKHARD